I.

White Haven Parish.

In reading the scanty accounts which have come down to us concerning the history of the Church in North Carolina before 1830, it often happens that we come upon names of parishes which convey no definite idea of locality, so completely have they died out and been forgotten. Such a name was that at the head of this article, at least to the writer, until a few months ago. White Haven Parish, Lincoln county, was familiar as the parish of Parson Miller, whose ministry covered so long a period and saw so many and great changes in the Church which he served so zealously; but where White Haven Parish was situated no printed letter, or journal, or clergy-list could tell. Thinking that others may feel a curiosity to know something of this old parish—its past history and its vanishing memories—I have ventured to put down such things as I have been able to learn concerning it.

White Haven church stood upon the east side of the old plank road from Charlotte to Lincolnton, about sixteen miles from Charlotte and one mile south of the present village of Lowesville Lowesville is in Lincoln county, but the site of the old church is in the county of Gaston. An old grave yard, surrounded by a dry stone wall, identifies the lo-

cality; and back of the grave-yard a few scattered trunks, dead and fast decaying, of what were once noble chestnuts, mark the spot where the humble log church stood beneath their shade. A Presbyterian church, called Castania, stands on the other side of the road, a hundred yards or so nearer to Lowesville. A few of the older inhabitants of the country on both sides of the Catawba remember when the old church was standing, and once in a while an old man comes along who remembers that he was baptized by Parson Miller; but even in its immediate neighborhood many are ignorant that a church ever stood there.

On the tenth of August, 1885, by the kindness of Mr. Frank Blythe, I was taken to this interesting spot. My companion had been baptized in infancy by Parson Miller, and remembered being sent by his mother, who had been brought up in that church, to take a hand with the neighbors in the periodical cleaning up of the grave yard. But for his personal knowledge of the location of the old church, I should have been unable to find it, as none of the neighbors could give me any certain information on this point. Some who knew that a church had once stood there, were not altogether positive about its having been the original White Haven, since another church of that name had once stood about two miles north of Lowesville.

The grave-yard is still kept up and used, as some recent graves

and grave stones testify. But it was very disappointing to find that none of the stones were of an early date, so far as appeared by their inscriptions. I was told that the most ancient graves lay just north of the present grave yard, and outside the stone wall. The earliest date discovered was 1804; and after this the next were not earlier than 1827. None were of any special interest. The earliest was the most curious, and the following inscription on it may possibly be an effusion of Parson Miller's muse:

Here lies the body of

BURCHATT KIMBELLE,

who was born March 20th, 1782. And died October 17th, A. D., 1804.

Early, not sudden, was her fate.
Soon, not surprising, Death his visit paid.
Her thought went forth to meet him on his way;
Nor gaiety forgot it was to die.
Does youth, does beauty read the line?
Does sympathetic fear their breast alarm?
Speak, dead Burchatt! breathe a strain divine
Even from the grave thou shalt have power to charm
Bid them give each day the merit and renown
Of dying well, though doomed but once to die.

The young lady above spoken of was much beloved and admired and her death caused wide-spread grief and distress. Persons are now living who—though not old enough to remember her—can still recall the feeling of general sorrow at her death, which lingered long in

the community, and which was a strong testimony to the beauty and graces implied in the words of her epitaph.

Besides this we were interested in two other stones—simple, undressed pieces of rough granite—at the head of two neighboring graves, with only the inscriptions, "C. N., June, 1851," and "M. N." These my friend was able to identify, by the initials, the date, and the later head-stones near by, as the graves of his grand father Clement Nantz and his wife.

After leaving the old grave-yard we went to the house of Mr. Green Abernathy, near Cowan's Ford, and found that he, his wife, and another old man living with him, all remembered more or less of the old church and the old Parson.

The following account is derived from various sources, from printed journals, from manuscript letters, and from personal relations received from different quarters. From Mr. Abernathy were obtained some new facts, and the confirmation of the chief points which had already been discovered. The principal source of information is, of course, Mr. Miller's letter to Dr. Hawks, dated "Mary's Grove, Burke Co., N. C., April 15th, 1830," which appeared first in the *Church Review*, and was republished in the CHURCH MESSENGER of October 15th, 1879.

The Rev. Robert Johnston Miller, a Scotchman by birth, and a Methodist preacher on the Tar River Circuit in 1785, having left the Methodists because he found that they

were drifting away from the Church, settled on the west bank of the Catawba in 1786. At the request of the people of "Whitehaven and the lower and upper Smyrna," he began to act as lay-reader, keeping up services on Sunday and catechising the children. His congregation were settled chiefly along the west bank of the Catawba in what was then Lincoln county, though at present much of it is within the limits of Gaston county. "They were chiefly emigrants from Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia," "a mixed people, Germans, English, Irish, and some Scotch, originally, but at that time very destitute of any regular religious instruction." "The most of them and their forefathers were, and had been, members of the Episcopal Church."

A congregation was organized, a vestry elected, and application was made to the General Assembly for an Act of incorporation. Prayer-Books could not be obtained. They had a few of the English Books, and Mr. Miller procured two copies of the first edition of the American Book published at Philadelphia. He also had printed at Salisbury the Catechism, to which he added some explanations of Church principles and usages.

The most numerous religious denomination with which he was brought into contact seems to have been the Lutheran, and there was something in their system of worship and doctrine more congenial to him as a Churchman than he found

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among other Protestants. They were in great need of proper ministers, and after much persuasion they prevailed upon Mr. Miller to be ordained by them though he confesses that he never was able to feel satisfied that he had acted agreeably to his principles in consenting to this. He took this step, however, with the fullest purpose of abiding faithful to the Church, and in the Letter of Orders which the Lutheran ministers gave him, his obedience was expressly declared to be due to the Protestant Episcopal Church.

It was soon after Mr. Miller began his work in this county that the few remaining clergy in the East began the effort for the organization of the Diocese of North Carolina. Mr. Miller was elected a member of the standing committee in 1793, and attended the convention at Tawboro in May, 1794, voting as one of the clergy for the Rev. Charles Pettigrew who was elected Bishop. Although this excellent man was never consecrated, yet he exerted himself to revive the interests of the Church throughout the State, and carried on an extensive correspondence with this object in view. Among other letters preserved by him is one from Mr. Miller, the material parts of which are as follows:

WHITEHANEN, 6th of May, 1795.

REV. AND DEAR SIR:

* * * * * * *

I have reason to hope that your pious wishes and charitable suppositions will be verified in the Rev. Mr. Dent, although I have not had an opportunity

of a personal acquaintance with him as yet; but those who have assure me that he is generally esteemed as a man of piety and learning, which to us, in our present situation, is, I hope, no small acquisition.*

The situation of the Lutheran clergy in this quarter, in my opinion, demands immediate attention. They have, since my last to you, lost their senior member, the Rev. Mr. A. Nussmann, a truly worthy, learned, and godly man, although bred a Franciscan. Some of them have expressed a desire of sending forward a number of their body to our convention, in order to form some bonds of coalescing, and I have reason to believe that, should such a circumstance take place, and the end accomplished with propriety, it would be beneficial to both parties; but of this

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*In the list of the "Names and Places of the Clergy," in the Pettigrew MS. after the names of seven clergymen, numbered consecutively, and their fields of labor designated, there is added, "the Rev. Mr Dent, near the Yadkin river." This is all I have ever seen in regard to his connection with North Carolina. In Bishop Burgess's "List of Persons ordained Deacons," it appears that Hatch Dent and Wm. Duke were ordained by Bishop Seabury, October 16, 1785, both these names appear in the earliest list of the clergy of the Diocese of Maryland, as reported to the General Convention in 1792 In 1795, the year of Mr. Miller's letter to Parson Pettigrew, Mr. Dent's name is not among the Maryland clergy, but it reappears in 1799; so that he probably came to North Carolina in 1794 or 1795, and returned to Maryland after only a short stay.

Since writing the above note I have been pleased to find, by reading Mr. John S. Henderson's Sketch of the Church in Rowan (published in Dr. Rumple's History of Rowan County), that my conjecture in regard to "Mr. Dent, near the Yadkin river," is correct. I learn also that Mr. Dent was the uncle of two clergymen now in North Carolina—the Rev. Messrs. Richard W., and Samuel S Barber.

you would be a much better judge, were you to visit this quarter in your official character; and you will permit me to hope that the period is not far distant

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As for myself and flock, I have abundant reason to be thankful to God for health of body and peace of mind, although my progress in the knowledge, love, and service of Him is far too torpid; but with some of my charge, at least, I hope it is otherwise, and may God of His mercy grant that it may soon be generally so.

The returns from the Register of Baptisms, from Easter ninety-four to Easter ninety-five, is eighty-five infants and nine adults; and the deaths are three venerable and godly old men, from eighty-seven to ninety five years of age, one woman * * * and her infant * * * and a man about forty-six. * * * *

We suffer much for a sufficient supply of Prayer-Books here, and it is a great bar to uniformity in our public assemblies in the outward mode of worship; and I sincerely wish that some effectual means could be devised to remedy this evil.

I am, my dear and Reverend Sir, Your Son and affectionate Friend in the Gospel, R. J. MILLER.

The Rev. Mr. Pettigrew, Bishop elect of North Carolina.

After this letter we have no certain information concerning White Haven for many years. Mr. Miller had extended his labors over a large territory, and early in this century he removed to Burke county, to that part since erected into Caldwell county, near the present town of Lenoir. He continued to visit his old parish at intervals, but of the particulars of its history we have no knowledge. This removal

took place probably about 1810; certainly before 1811.

When he left White Haven he recommended to his people a Lutheran minister by the name of David Henckel, though he visited the church for divine service occasionally. On one of these visits some misunderstanding arose between the two about the use of the church, both of them having made appointments for the same day. This resulted in the building of another church by Henckel and his adherents, a mile or two north of Lowesville, which new church was also known as White Haven—thus giving rise to the confusion about the name which was mentioned before.

David Henckel seems to have been an asserter and maintainer of the conservative and sacramental system of doctrine held by the old Lutherans, and to have opposed the tendency towards the baldness and emptiness of Zwinglinism prevalent among them in later times. This gave great offence to Methodists and others, and very extravagant accounts were given of Mr. Henckel's teaching in regard to the power of absolution, etc. Differences upon these, and other points, gave rise to bitter disputes among the Lutherans themselves, and finally led to a schism which has not been entirely healed to this day. A large number of Lutherans—the bulk of those in Tennessee, and many congregations in North Carolina—were known as Henckelites; and so fierce was the contention between the two factions that

in Cabarrus county cases are known where worshippers carried their fire-arms to church on Sunday in order to be ready to defend their occupation of the building against the expected claim of their oppo nents. This, however, is a digression, and has nothing to do with White Haven.

The story of the old parish is al most ended. It never had enjoyed the benefit of regular ministerial services, and the wonder is that it lived as long as it did. Any vigor ous or aggressive life was, under the circumstances, impossible. Those who had brought from other parts the knowledge and the love of the Church had died out, and their children not unnaturally fell away. Some families of intelligence and culture, and also some of the plainer but substantial inhabitants of the neighborhood, adhered for years to the Church of their fathers. The names Forney, Abernathy, Shipp, Nantz, Hager, Robinson, Burton, Fite, are still associated with the memory of the old parish. The revival of the Church under Bishop Ravenscroft and Bishop Ives came too late; and for many years the Church in this diocese was too ill-furnished with ministers to look properly after this scattered and distant flock. The parish of White Haven was indeed admitted into union with the convention under the nominal rectorship of Parson Miller in 1822; in 1828 Dr. Wm. Johnston was appointed by the convention to solicit funds in this parish for the Missionary Society; and in 1824 Robert H. Burton and Daniel M. Forney were appointed lay-readers. Bishop Ravenscroft made two visitations to it in 1824, and confirmed sixteen persons, probably the old communicants who had never before had an opportunity of receiving the Laying on of Hands. But Bishop Ravenscroft saw clearly,

and intimates in his Address to the Convention of 1826, that there was little hope of the continuance of the congregation. It seems that some of the original Churchmen were so much identified with the Lutherans, by reason of their personal affection for Mr. Henckel, that they became almost entirely estranged from the Church, of which indeed they had seen and known but little. Add the further fact that this was the period of the great exodus from North Carolina to the West and South west, and that a very large proportion—perhaps the best part in strength and influence of the congregation—about this time removed to Missouri, and the extinction of the old parish is easily accounted for. Mr. Miller for some years made occasional mention of it in his reports; but in 1833, when Bishop Ives made his first visitation to this part of the diocese, he could find but three or four persons in Lincoln county who still adhered to the Church, though he made "diligent inquiry." The Rev. Edward M. Forbes began his work in Lincoln county in ~~1840~~ 1841; he makes no mention of any congregation or parish in the county. Two years after he seems to have begun work at White Haven, and in ~~1844~~ 1843 the Rev. A. F. Olmsted reports a visitation of the Bishop, and seven confirmations, and fourteen communicants. Mr. Olmsted left Lincolnton in 1846, and ~~that year, June 15th~~ July 15th 1845, Bishop Ives made his ~~second~~ third and last visitation. From that day to this, so far as is known, the sound of the ancient services of the Church has never been heard in White Haven. The site of the old church is a cultivated field, and persons whose memory goes back thirty years remember it only as it is now

* Rev. Dr. Huske had a service there in April 184

The history of White Haven is ended. J. B. C., Jr.

Oct. 3, 1885.

II.

Robert Johnston Miller.

There is no more interesting character in the annals of the Church in North Carolina than the man whose name stands at the head of this article. In the course of his long life he had strange ecclesiastical experiences. He himself tells us that in the perplexities of his situation he did not always succeed in making a correct application of his principles to the facts before him; yet no one can study his history without being impressed with the feeling that even in his mistakes of judgment he displayed noble qualities of heart. In every action of his life, so far as we know it, he commands our sympaty and respect. The following too meager account of him is gathered from various sources—partly oral, partly manuscript, partly published histories, journals, letters. The fullest accounts of his life to be met with in print are probably in his letter to Dr. Hawks, referred to in a former article on White Haven parish, and in Dr. Bernheim's History of the German Settlements and Lutheran Churches in Carolina.

Robert Johnston Miller, the third son of George and Margaret Miller, was born in Baldovia, Angusshire, Scotland, July 11th, 1758.* His

*These particulars of his early life are taken from Dr. Bernheim's work above alluded to. I know not whence he de-

parents are said to have intended him for the ministry, and with this view to have sent him to the classical school at Dundee. He was bred up in the communion of "the Catholic remainder" of the Church of Scotland, under the pastoral care of the venerable Bishop Rail, so long as he remained in his native country; but when he was fifteen years old an elder brother, then a prosperous merchant in Charlestown, Massachusetts, invited him to make his home with him, and he therefore came to America, arriving in 1774. During the war of the Revolution he enlisted upon the American side, and was in the battles of Long Island, of Brandywine, and of White Plains, in the first of which he received a flesh wound in the face; he was also with the army during the memorable winter at Valley Forge. He came South with the army, and was in Virginia when it was disbanded upon the conclusion of hostilities, and for a time made his home in that State.

At this period of his life he became identified with the Methodists, and for a time acted as one of their preachers. The Methodists at this time distinctly repudiated the idea that they intended any separation from the Church, and were considered by Mr. Miller as being Churchmen. Having left home at so early

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rived them, but there are incidental correspondences between this account and Mr. Miller's briefer mention of his early years, which lead me to conclude that Dr. Bernheim had access to authentic sources of information.

an age, and having thereby been deprived of proper instruction in Church principles, it is not to be supposed that he had very clear and intelligent views on the subject, though his convictions appear to have been firm at all times. He was very strongly drawn towards the Methodists by the stress which they laid upon the importance of personal religious experience, and by the enthusiasm and Christian zeal which from the first characterized this great movement. While one of their preachers he rode with Dr. Coke from Virginia to attend a conference held in the fall of 1784 in Franklin county, N. C., and continued with Coke for several weeks. Their conversation was chiefly upon Coke's plan for organizing the Methodists of America into what was to be called the Methodist Episcopal Church—up to this time it having been only a society making no claim to have power of ordination and the administration of the sacraments. Mr. Miller tells us that he was unable to give his assent to this plan, since it had early been impressed upon his mind that to constitute a true branch of the Church there must be the apostolic ministry transmitted by episcopal ordination. It may be remarked here that there is no reason to suppose that Mr. Miller, while a Methodist preacher, ever undertook to administer the sacraments. With his known views on the subject it is quite certain that he never did. Very few of the most extreme of their ministers had up to this period ventured upon this step;

an attempt made by some of those in Virginia just before this to ordain ministers and to administer the sacraments, had caused great dissensions amongst them. In this very year of 1784 the Rev. Devereux Jarratt tells us that he was present at the conference held at Ellis's, in Virginia, and that Asbury himself was in attendance "still striving to render an attachment to the Church yet more firm and permanent. For this end he had brought Mr. Wesley's *Twelve Reasons* against a separation from the Church," the first of which reasons was, "because it would be a contradiction to the solemn and repeated declarations, which we have made in all manner of ways."

These weeks of intercourse with Coke, and the rapid progress of events at this period, opened Mr. Miller's eyes to the change in the attitude assumed by the Methodists, though he did not at once sever his connection with them. During the year 1785 he acted as preacher upon the Tar River circuit, but at the end of the year he withdrew from the conference, being unwilling to co operate with them in their open and avowed separation from the Church. He cheerfully testifies to the brotherly kindness which had marked his intercourse with the members of the conference, and says that they publicly declared that they had nothing against him, but that he had voluntarily withdrawn on account of his "disapprobation of their conduct and rules."

His health having shown signs of failing in the low country, he removed in 1786 to the west bank of the Catawba in Lincoln county (now Gaston county) and at the request of the inhabitants, who were very destitute of religious instruction, he began to act as lay reader and catechist, as has been narrated in the account of White Haven parish. His ministrations seem to have proved very acceptable to the people, and gradually extended his influence among those of the inhabitants who had been attached to the Episcopal Church in the countries from which they had emigrated.

Mr. Miller now found himself in a very distressing situation. There were no ministers of the Church within hundreds of miles of him. He could not baptize nor administer any holy ordinance. His people had to go to the Lutheran or the Presbyterian ministers to have their children baptized, or to let them go unbaptized. He does not seem to have felt any inclination towards seeking a closer union with the Presbyterians. His feelings as a Scotch Episcopalian probably rendered such a thought distasteful to him, and he knew that their doctrines and his were too different to allow such an association to be a comfortable one. On the contrary there was much in the old Lutheran teaching in regard to the sacraments which as a Churchman he could approve, and there was in his mind no inherited or acquired prejudice against them. It is possible

that he knew that many of the Lutheran churches had preserved the Episcopal form of government, and that the Scandinavian Church is generally conceded to have preserved the Apostolic Episcopate. Their liturgical worship, with the familiar Collects, Epistles, and Gospels, and their observance of the holy seasons of the Christian year, must also have had no little influence in inclining him to a closer union with his Lutheran neighbors, who formed a considerable and a very estimable portion of the population of Lincoln, Rowan, and Mecklenburg counties. And when the idea was suggested by them that he should receive ordination from them, it must have occurred to him that if he should consent to this his people would at least be in no worse case than they were in already. And so finally, notwithstanding an irrepressible feeiing that he might be making a mistake, he consented to be ordained, and in St. John's church, Cabarrus county, May 20th, 1794, at the first Lutheran synodical meeting ever held in North Carolina, Robert Johnston Miller, an avowed Episcopalian, was ordained by the Lutheran Ministerium, the first English Lutheran minister in North Carolina, and the first Lutheran minister of any kind ordained in this State.*

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* "Their congregations (the Lutherans) were at that time in a very declining state, and overrun by imposters assuming the ministerial office without any regular authority whatsoever. To remedy these evils they pressed me

Mr. Miller I say, was an avowed Episcopalian, and even in taking this extraordinary step he was careful not to be misunderstood. The ordination certificate, as given by Dr. Bernheim from the original document, agrees with what Mr. Miller himself tells us in regard to it, and is as follows:

"To *all whom it may concern, greeting:*

WHEREAS, A great number of Christian people in Lincoln county have formed themselves into a society by the name of White Haven Church, and also having formed a vestry: We, the subscribers, having been urged by the pressing call from the said Church to ordain a minister for the good of their children, and for the enjoyment of ye Gospel ordinances among them, from us the ministers of the Lutheran Church in North Carolina" (here much of the certificate is torn away and lost) "according to ye infallible word of God, administer ye

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with the plea of necessity, to accept ordination from their hands, and mentioned that the Rev. Dr. Pilmour, of Philadelphia, had done so in the time of the Revolutionary war. There is now and was then a considerable number of Presbyterian clergy in this section, and the most of them with whom I had any intimacy recommended the same course, and the congregation earnestly requested me to accept of it, and that they would be perfectly satisfied with my ministrations. In short, as I thought then, and do think now, contrary to my own better sentiments, I consented to receive the ordination from them, not as a Lutheran minister, but as an Episcopalian."—*Mr. Miller's Letter to Dr Hawks.*

sacraments, and to have ye care of souls; he always being obliged to obey ye rules, ordinances and customs of ye Christian Society called ye Protestant Episcopal Church in America. Given under our hands and seals, North Carolina, Cabarrus county, May 20th, 1794. Signed by Adolphus Nussmann, Sr., Johan Gottfriedt Arendt, Arnold Roschen, Christopher Bernhardt and Charles Storch."

Dr. Bernheim states that "on the reverse side of this certificate the Lutheran ministers gave their reasons why they had ordained a man who was attached to the Episcopal Church as a minister of that de nomination," but with a reserve characteristic of his dealings with delicate questions, he is careful to give not the least intimation what those reasons were. J. B. C. Jr.

An interesting part of Mr. Miller's history is his connection with the effort to organize the diocese of North Carolina, and to obtain a bishop for it, in 1794. His attachment to the Church, and his activity in keeping up its influence and its services, seem to have been widely known; and at the meeting in Tawboro, Nov. 21st, 1793, he was elected a member of the standing committee, and was notified of the meeting to be held May 28th, 1794, for the purpose of perfecting the organization and electing a bishop. He must have gone immediately from his Lutheran ordination to the Episcopal Convention, for he appeared upon the first day of the session—

May 28; and at that time it could hardly have required less than a week to travel from Cabarrus county to Tawboro. At this meeting he took his seat as one of the clergy, reading the Morning Service on the second day; he was chosen a clerical member of the standing committee, voted as a clergyman in the election of a bishop, and signed the testimonial which was transmitted to the General Convention, as one of the clergy, as may be seen by reference to the testimonial, given in Bishop White's Memoirs. In the proceedings of this convention of 1794 there is nothing to indicate that he had not been duly ordained; but in the list of the "Names and Places of the Clergy" in the Pettigrew MS., though his name and parish stand first in the list, there is a note added at the bottom:— "P. S. The Rev. Robert Johnston Miller, White Haven Parish, Lincoln Co., a Lutheran minister." In one of Mr. Pettigrew's letters to Bishop White, he says of him: "At our convention there was a gentleman who had been ordained in the Lutheran Church, and wished his ordination could be recognized in our Church, and, indeed, signified that if it should be considered invalid, he would submit to a re-ordination. He appears to be a decent man. He has since our convention wrote me that he thinks the society would wish (of which there are a number of respectable clergy) a coalition with our Church."

After this convention Mr. Miller returned with new ardor to his

parochial duties, and seems to have had great hopes of the prosperity of the Church when Mr. Pettigrew should be consecrated and begin his work as bishop. He exerted himself to incline the few Lutheran ministers towards a plan for union with the Church, and hoped that the influence of Mr. Pettigrew might accomplish this to the advantage of all concerned. These hopes are indicated in his letter to Mr. Pettigrew, dated May 6th, 1795. But unfortunate circumstances prevented the hoped for consecration, upon which so much seemed to depend, and Mr. Miller was left powerless to do anything for the effectual building up of the Church. It was many a long year before he again saw the face of an Episcopal minister.

For nealy thirty years after his ordination by the Lutherans, Mr. Miller continued to be one of their most active and influential ministers. As Secretary of their Synod, as a zealous and untiring missionary, and as a member of most important committees, he appears as exerting no little influence upon the growth and development of the Lutheran denomination, not only in North Carolina, but in Virginia, Tennessee, and South Carolina, as well. He tells us that he drew up the constitution adopted by the Synod in 1803, upon the lines of the constitution which had been adopted by the General Convention; and that it was intended as a basis of union between the Lutherans and Episcopalians while the latter

should remain in their unorganized condition. He says further that when he first entered their ministry he reserved to himself and his people perfect liberty "to return and unite in full, and without any impediment, with the bosom of the Protestant Episcopal Church, whenever it should please God to revive her in this State;" and that "by the spirit, terms, and obligation of our union, they [the Lutherans] were bound to forward this object to the utmost of their ability." Mr. Miller says that this union was effected and the constitution drawn up at Salisbury. Dr. Bernheim mentions the meeting at Salisbury, May 2d, 1803, but says that the constitution was not adopted until the second session of the Synod, held at Lincolnton, Oct. 17th, of the same year. He does not give any account of what were the several articles of the constitution then adopted. He mentions that Mr. Miller was Secretary of this and of the next Synod, 1804. Mr. Miller resisted the tendency among the Lutherans at this period towards loose views of the ministerial office, and has the honor of being the only member of the Synod of 1817 whose vote was given against allowing unordained men to administer the sacraments. In the same year he was one of a committee of three to examine and report upon a book called "Luther," which was afterwards published by the Synod for the doctrinal instruction of their people.

But it was not only in the Luth.

eran Synods that he was active and prominent. His chief work was pastoral. None of his associates surpassed him in parochial diligence and missionary enterprise. Besides his parish of White Haven he served several other churches, St. Peter's and Smyrna, in Lincoln county; St. Michael's, in Iredell; and afterwards St. Andrew's, in Burke, though the last was not organized until after he had been ordained by Bishop Moore. He also ministered with more or less regularity in Salisbury, and in the neighborhood of the present parish of Christ Church, Rowan county. His principle charges, however, were White Haven and St. Michael's. The latter was composed partly of German Lutherans and partly of Churchmen who had emigrated from Maryland about 1794, part of the colony which came to Rowan in that year.

It was during this period of his Lutheran ministry that he removed to Burke county, where he continued to reside, near the site of the present town of Lenoir, until his death. In what year he made this change is unknown to the writer, though it must have been before the year 1811. He had also married a Miss Perkins, of Lincoln county, by whom he had several children, some of whom are still living.

In 1811, he set out from his home in Burke county upon an extensive tour, being sent out by the Synod, the first of a number of *exploring missionaries*, who were to seek out

scattered Lutherans, and not only to minister to them as occasion should serve, but also to report to the Synod the condition and prospects of the missionary field. In the performance of this arduous duty he travelled through a good part of Virginia, and of South Carolina, and also into Tennessee. He made an interesting report to the Synod, extracts from which are given by Dr. Bernheim. It concludes thus: "On my whole tour I have baptized this year two adults and sixty children, preached sixty-seven times, travelled three thousand miles, and received $77.44 for my support, without asking for a cent in any way, and arrived at home in health and safety. Honor, thanks, and praise be to the Lord"

The year 1817 was almost as much of an epoch to the Lutherans as it was to the Churchmen of North Carolina, though of a different character. In the Synod which met in October, 1817, the latitudinarians carried the day in regard to the licensing of unordained men to administer the sacraments, and by that and other action under the leadership of the Moravian, Gotlieb Shober, laid the foundation for the split with the party led by David Henkel, and the consequent organization of the Tennessee Synod. Mr. Miller, as was before remarked, was the only minister in the Synod who opposed this measure to the end; and he seems to have taken a part in only one subsequent meeting, viz., that in 1819. The organization of the Diocese of North Car-

olina, in 1817, and the visitations of Bishop Moore in 1819 and again in 1820, encouraged him to hope that the long desired opportunity of obtaining episcopal ordination was now at hand. In 1821 the convention met in Raleigh, April 28th. Mr. Miller attended, and on Tuesday, May 1st, in the forenoon, after divine service in the Methodist church, he was ordained deacon by Bishop Richard Channing Moore, of the Diocese of Virginia. In the evening of the same day he was advanced to the priesthood.

Of Mr. Miller's history after this period we must speak very briefly, and must confine ourselves to his pastoral labors. His efforts to effect a fraternal alliance between the Lutheran Synod and the Diocesan Convention require a separate article. But before leaving this subject it may be worth while to say that he did not feel that after his ordination in 1821 he met with the co operation from his late associates, which by the spirit and terms of their union he had a right to expect. The lesson which he draws from his experience is that it is vain, if not absurd, to suppose "that the successful attempt of amalgamating the different sects, creeds, order, and worship of all those who call themselves Christians, will, or can, produce that unity of faith and practice enjoined by the pure Word of God." "And it furnishes us with an experimental demonstration, how impossible it is to attempt, in any degree, a compromise with error, schism, or heresy, without injury to

the truth." He seems to have found it impossible to recover for the Church those congregations which in consequence of his action had been for thirty years identified with the Lutherans, and he sadly reflects that "neither sorrow nor lamentation will recover the ground that has been lost to the Episcopal cause in this section of the country in consequence of that fatal error of mine."

After his admission to the ministry of the Church, Mr. Miller labored most faithfully as long as his strength endured. Christ Church, Rowan, was admitted into union with the convention with Almond Hall as its representative in 1821; St. Michael's, Iredell county, and White Haven and Smyrna, in Lincoln, in 1822; St. Peter's, Lincoln county, and St. Andrew's, Burke county, in 1823. All these were the fruits of Mr. Miller's labors, and later on he reports also a congregation on John's River, in Burke county. It seems probable, also, that the congregation admitted into union with the convention in 1822, under the name of St. Peter's Church, Lexington, was part of his charge. In 1821 the congregations in these counties were under his pastoral care, and the Missionary Society of the Diocese gave him as his helpers the Rev. Thomas Wright, of Wilmington, who had been ordained Deacon by Bishop Moore in 1820, and the Rev. Robert Davis, of Orange county, ordained Deacon in 1821—though Mr. Wright's time was mostly given to Wadesboro.

In 1823 Mr. Davis left the diocese, and Mr. Miller reports for all the churches in Rowan, Lincoln, Iredell, and Burke counties. In 1824 he reports that the Lutheran members of St. Michael's had all withdrawn, and after 1825 the name of this parish disappears from the journals of the convention. The portion of the congregation remaining under Mr. Miller's care was composed almost entirely of one family—that of Mr. Charles Mills—and for some years it is reported under the name of that family, "Mills', Iredell county." It is now the parish of St. James, Iredell county.

There is little more to be told, except the bare outlines contained in the parochial report. St. Luke's, Salisbury, Christ Church, Rowan, St. James, Iredell, fairly represent parishes partly founded by this venerable man. St. Andrew's, Burke, was probably the beginning of the present parish at Lenoir; White Haven has long crumbled to decay; of St Peter's and Smyrna, Lincoln county, even the locality is forgotten.

Mr. Miller attended no convention after that of 1829. He is mentioned from time to time in the Addresses of Bishop Ravenscroft and of Bishop Ives, and always with the greatest affection and respect. His bodily strength gradually decayed, and in his address to the convention of 1835 Bishop Ives says: "In recording the changes which, during the past year, have occurred among us, I notice with unfeigned sorrow the death of the Reverend Robert J. Miller, of Burke county, a clergyman of whom we may emphatically say, *for him to live was Christ; and to die is gain.*"

Oct. 8th, 1885. J. B. C., Jr.

III.

Fraternal Relations.

THE DIOCESAN CONVENTION AND THE LUTHERAN SYNOD.

It is a fact not generally remembered that delegations from the Lutheran Synod once sat in the Convention of the Diocese of North Carolina, and that our delegates also sat in the Lutheran Synod. The names of the Rev. Gottlieb Shober, the Rev. Daniel Scherer, Gen'l. Paul Barringer, and Col. Henry Ratz are found among the list of members of the convention of 1823, and during this period the minutes of the Lutheran Synod record the presence of the Rev. Adam Empie, the Rev. G. T. Bedell, and the Hon. Duncan Cameron, from our convention.

These mutual courtesies were due directly to the influence of the Rev. Robert Johnston Miller, and they constitute an after-piece to the peculiar and anomalous position which he occupied for the twenty-seven years of his connection with the Lutheran Synod. A brief consideration of the relation formerly existing between the Lutherans and Churchmen in North Carolina, will, therefore, not unfitly conclude this imperfect account of his life and work.

Concerning this episode in our diocesan history there is little of importance to be related, except what is contained in the journals of the convention, for the years 1821, 1822, and 1823. But copies

of those early journals are now so scarce that few persons are acquainted with the particulars of our diocesan history during that period, and it is hoped that the following paragraphs may not be considered as altogether superfluous.

It is often apparent that the best informed members of our diocean conventions are ignorant of the recorded proceedings of the conventions of fifty years ago, even when those proceedings relate to existing interests. In the convention held at Asheville, in May, 1885, an important matter was discussed, affecting the present interests of the dioceses of North and East Carolina. The question at issue depended upon certain recorded action of former conventions, and yet not one man who discussed it, bishop, priest, deacon, or layman, could give any clear and acurate information in regard to it. It is, therefore, not improbable that many persons in North and East Carolina may be ignorant even of those facts of our fraternal intercourse with the Lutherans, which the printed journals preserve.

But though concerning the actual interchange of friendly greetings between the two bodies, and the visits of fraternal delegations, there is little new to be related, yet there is this to be observed, which has hitherto escaped attention; that the friendship between the Lutherans and the Churchmen in North Carolina did not result from the influence of Mr. Miller. On the contrary it

was the state of mutual sympathy and friendship between the two, existing long before Mr. Miller came into the country, which explains his curious course of conduct. He only perpetuated and rendered more close and intimate a state of feeling between them which he found existing in 1786.

It has been already remarked that there was much in the doctrines and worship of the old Lutherans to attract the favorable regard of Churchmen. Indeed, it is well known that Luther and Melancthon and other protestant divines exercised no small influence upon the course and character of the English Reformation. The further fact that the Hanoverian Kings were originally Lutherans, and so far as they had any religion at all, remained Lutherans until the accession of George III, had a tendency to promote a friendly feeling between the members of the two communions in the colonies. In the reign of Queen Anne overtures were made by the King of Prussia looking to the adoption by the Lutherans of Prussia of the Articles and the Liturgy of the English Church, and the proposition to consecrate bishops for Prussia, and so to convey to that kingdom the Apostolic succession was received so favorably that the most sanguine hopes were entertained. But for delays and complications caused by the desire to include Hanover in this arrangement, it seems more than likely that these two great barriers against Roman tyranny, the Church of Eng-

land and the Lutherans of Germany, might have been happily united. As further illustrating the friendly relations which have thus for centuries been preserved, it may be mentioned that for some years past the Prussian and British governments have maintained a bishop at Jerusalem, selected alternately from England and Germany, and consecrated by the English bishops.

From all this it may be inferred that the natural state of feeling between Lutherans and Churchmen, who found themselves in a condition of common poverty and destitution in the wilds of the new world, was of the kindest and most friendly character; and we are prepared to find evidences of this among the German and English settlers along the banks of the Yadkin and the Catawba.

The records of those days are too meager to afford us detailed accounts of such matters as this, but the evidence, though scanty, is conclusive. In Dr. Rumple's account of the establishment of "the oldest Lutheran congregation organized in the Province of North Carolina," he says, "in the year of 1768, John Lewis Beard, a wealthy citizen of Salisbury, and a member of the Lutheran Church, was bereaved by the death of a daughter, and her body was interred in a lot of ground owned by her father. To prevent her remains from being disturbed by the march of civilization, Mr. Beard executed a deed for the lot, containing 144 square poles, to a body of trustees of the Evangelical

Lutheran congregation of the Township of Salisbury, allowing ministers of the High [*sic*] Church of England to occupy it, when not used by the Lutherans." The buildings afterward erected upon this lot were used in accordance with the provisions of the above deed down to the year 1825.

The Rev. Theodorus Swain Drage having been "licensed for the Plantations" by the bishop of London, May 29th, 1769, was by Gov. Tryon recommended to the vestry of St. Luke's parish, Rowan county, by a letter dated November 12th, of the same year. July 9th, 1770, the Governor sent him a letter of induction. He seems to have gone to Salisbury in the Autumn of 1769 and to have entered at once upon the task of putting into effect the colonial law for the organization of the parish and the support of the church. In this he was strenuously opposed by the Presbyterian element in the county, and a protracted struggle ensued, from which Mr. Drage seems after a year or two to have retired, despairing of success. This is mentioned merely to emphasize the fact that during all this exciting period there is evidence of the most perfect accord and harmony between the Lutherans and the Churchmen. In his letters Mr. Drage speaks of the relations between them as being kindly and cordial, and in the most critical period of their history he showed himself disposed to do all in his power to further the interests of the Lutherans, as the following facts prove:

Dr. Bernheim relates that "in

the year 1772 Christopher Rintelmann, from Organ Church, in Rowan county, and Christopher Layrle, from St. John's Church, in Mecklenburg county, were sent as a delegation to Europe. * * * for a supply of ministers and school teachers, for the various Lutheran congregations, then organized in North Carolina," and adds that "these commissioners traveled first to London." Dr. Bernheim says nothing of the relations between the Lutherans and Churchmen at this period, but in the MS. volume of documents relating to North Carolina, in the archives of the General Convention is a letter from the Rev. Mr. Drage to the Secretary of the Society for the Propogation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, dated "Salisbury, St. Luke's Parish, N. C., February 28th, 1771," in which he commends to the attention and kind offices of the Society, "two of his parishioners," who, he says, were about to go to England and thence to Germany, to raise an endowment for a Lutheran minister and school master. This was unquestionably the delegation of which Dr. Bernheim speaks. It may have been unexpectedly delayed until next year, or Mr. Drage, following the old custom, may have dated his letter February 1771, when according to our present usage we should date it 1772. In the same letter Mr. Drage speaks of the cordial relations existing between the Lutherans and the Churchmen of the county. The fact that so uncompromising a champion of the rights of the

Church, speaks in this way, and shows so much interest in assisting the Lutherans in their first effort to obtain ministers and teachers for their struggling congregations, indicates a warm and earnest feeling of mutual sympathy and affection, which is also confirmed by other parts of his correspondence.

When Mr. Miller settled upon the Catawba in 1786 the leading Lutheran minister in North Carolina was the Rev. Adolph Nussmann, who had been sent out in 1773 in response to the appeal of the delegation above referred to. It was therefore but natural that he should find himself falling into the habit of friendly intercourse, which he found already established. The steps by which he was led to attempt a still closer and more intimate union of the two religious bodies have been described in former articles.

With the first promise of reviving life and prosperity in the church in North Carolina, the idea of organic union with the Lutherans was found to be an impracticable one.

Unfortunately the Lutherans during the time of Mr. Miller's connection with them, had been gradually drifting away from their own system of doctrine and worship, and becoming more and more like the bodies of English dissenters by whom they were chiefly surrounded. This is no place for the discussion of this question, but it is a fact that in 1821, when Mr. Miller was ordained deacon and priest by Bishop Moore, the Lutherans of North Carolina had almost totally abandoned

those devotional practices, and those sacramental doctrines, which had both in Europe and America been such a bond of union between them and us. But there still remained a *sentiment* springing from the memory of past association, and Mr. Miller anxiously sought to perpetuate the fraternal relation in which he had lived with his Lutheran brethren for nearly thirty years.

His first appearance in the convention was as a delegate from the Lutheran Synod. On page fourth of the journal of 1821, is the following entry: "It being ascertained that the Rev. Robert Johnson Miller, of Burke county, has come to this convention in the capacity of a delegate from the German and English Lutheran Synod of North Carolina, and for the purpose of effecting as far as practicable, intercourse and union between the Episcopalians and some of the Lutheran congregations:

Resolved, That the Rev. Mr. Miller be cordially received in the above capacity and admitted to a seat in this convention." Mr. Miller also presented a formal communication from the Synod, and upon the recommendation of the committee on the state of the church, the Revs. Adam Empie and G. T. Bedell and the Hon. Duncan Cameron were appointed a committee to attend the Lutheran Synod and "to consider of and agree upon such terms of union, as may tend to the mutual advantage and welfare of both churches, not inconsistant with the constitution and canons of this church."

This committee attended the meeting of the synod held in Lau's Church, Guilford county, on the 17th of June, 1821, with a letter from Bishop Moore, conveying to to that body information concerning the above action of the convention. The minutes of the Synod say ex pressly that the committee "were all affectionately received," and the following committee appointed to confer with them, namely: the Revs. G. Shober, Michael Rauch, and Henry Ratz, Esq. The result of the conference between these two committees was a series of resolutions which will be found on page 11 of the journal of 1822. They declare that it is deemed "expedient and desirable that the Lutheran Synod and the Protestant Episcopal Church of North Carolina should be united together in the closest bonds of friendship;" they then provide that each of these bodies "may send a delegation of one or more persons" to the other; and that these delegates shall be entitled to speak and to vote "in all cases except when a division is called for, in which case they shall not vote," and they further provide that all ministers of either body shall be entitled to honorary seats in the other. These resolutions were at once adopted by the Synod, and the Revs. G. Shober, Jacob Scherer and Henry Ratz, Esq., were appointed delegates to the convention, which was to meet in Raleigh in April, 1822.

At this convention (1822) none of the Lutheran delegates were

present, but the committee presented the resolutions agreed upon and adopted by the Synod, together with a letter from the Rev. G. Shober, and the resolutions were unanimously adopted. At the same time the Rev. Messrs. Miller, Davis and Wright of the clergy, and Messrs. Alexander Caldcleugh, and Duncan Cameron were appointed delegates to the Lutheran Synod.

In the journals of 1823, page 3, among the names of the attending members of the convention, we find the following: "The Rev. G. Shober, the Rev. Daniel Sherer, Gen. Paul Barringer and Col. Henry Ratz," and on page 15 we read that the Rev. Messrs. Miller and Davis, of the clergy, and Dr. Wm. R. Holt, and Alexander Caldcleugh, of the laity, were appointed delegates to the Lutheran Synod.

With the Convention of 1823 all mention of delegates to or from the Lutheran Synod ceases, though no formal action was taken to repeal the "Fraternal Union;" and under it a delegation from either body might still probably be entitled to sit and to vote in the other. But as the Lutherans and Episcopalians were chiefly settled in different parts of the State, and held their meetings in towns far distant from each other, there were difficulties in carrying out this arrangement, while no compensating benefits seemed likely to be gained. The Convention of 1823 was held in Salisbury; hence the attendance of Lutherans at that time. Up to

1840 only once again did the Convention meet in the west, and we hear no more of delegations from Synod or from Convention.

But though this may be a sufficient reason to account for the fact of the cessation of this interchanges of delegations, yet there were probably deeper and more fundamental causes which would under other circumstances have produced the same result. By the consecration of a Bishop of North Carolina, and by the distinct and positive Church teaching of Bishop Ravenscroft, the differences between the Lutherans and Episcopalians must have been brought out with a distinctness unknown before. Although several of the Lutheran Churches in Europe had preserved the Apostolic episcopate, and the old Swedish churches in Pennsylvania had already united with the Episcopal Church and acknowledged the pastoral government of Bishop White. The North Carolina Lutherans were not at all inclined to such a union as this. Their pastors were mostly from Hanover, and, as has been said before, they had fallen off very much from the purity of early Lutheranism. The Augsburg Confession itself was branded by their Synod as being tainted with Romanism, and they had for some years allowed unordained men to administer both the sacraments; liturgical services had very generally fallen into disuse, and at this very time the most acrimonious controversy was raging among them, and a schism had already been made, re-

sulting chiefly from this back-sliding from their old principles.

It is also beyond question that Mr. Miller's creditable desire for a closer union with the Lutherans had involved his own people in these same corruptions of doctrine and practice, so that perhaps the greater part of them had become almost entirely estranged from the principles and the customs of the Church. Bishop Ravenscroft's great work was to give such a *certain sound* that no one could mistake it, and to find out who in North Carolina was on the side of the Church as a matter of conscience and with distinct and intelligent convictions. Even had the principles of Churchmen and Lutherans been much more in accord than they were, there could have been no sort of sympathy between the spirit which began to animate the Church in this State, and that which then prevailed among the Lutheran brethren.

But still further, the fundamental principle of the Church being the maintenance, not only of primitive truth, but of APOSTOLIC ORDER as well, it was hardly to be expected that those who had departed from the latter, and who did not require any kind of ordination in a minister of God's Word and Sacraments, should remain in such perfect sympathy with her as to take part in her councils and legislation. It is gratifying to remember the spirit of mutual love which this long co-operation and friendship indicated, and we may trust that it still continues, but such a union as the one attempted was, in the nature of the case, impracticable.

J. B. C., JR.

Oct. 22d, 1885.